

## CONFESSIONS OF A WIFE

### THE UNATTACHED WOMAN

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Confession CLXI.

"Do you think that Eliene will ever forgive him?" asked Dick as I finished Harry Symone's letter and looked up and saw that he had finished the one from Eliene.

"I don't know, dear," I answered. "To me it seems the unforgivable sin. I could not have my love desecrated by having it shared by another. I think if I were Eliene and had those blessed babies to take up my attention and plenty of money to gratify every wish, as she has, I would close that page in the book of life on which was written the word 'husband.'"

As I said this there was a rap at the door and Dick opened it to find Mrs. Denby standing before him.

"Come in," he said, and I hastened forward as I like Mrs. Denby as well as any woman at the hotel. She is about forty and very beautiful. I imagine much better looking than when she was younger, for in her eyes and about her mouth is an expression that one never sees on the face of unthinking youth.

"I don't know whether to come in or not," she said as she hesitated in the doorway. And then as she entered she explained: "I hope, Mrs. Waverly, you will never be one of those unfortunate beings—an unattached woman of middle age."

"I don't see any reason for you being unattached, Mrs. Denby," said Dick gallantly as he seated her in the easiest chair.

"But I am, my boy," she answered with a quick upward look and then she leaned suddenly forward. "I wonder if you will understand if I tell to you two young people some very important truths that I have learned through sad experience?"

"Don't look as though I had suddenly gone crazy, for I have not. When I came in here tonight it was to

make you a little friendly call and try and take away with me some of your happiness, for you don't need it all, you improvident people.

"But you look so perfectly blissful that it came over me all at once that once upon a time I was just as happy as you are and that I threw it away because I could not find it within my heart to forgive what I considered a great wrong.

"I need not tell you what that was. Both of you will probably remember my divorce suit, or, if you were too young, some one has told you about it. I found that my husband had been untrue to me, and when I taxed him with it he begged my forgiveness on his bended knees and told me that few women can fathom the complex heart of man. 'Man can love devotedly all his life any one woman and be untrue to her any hour of the twenty-four,' said he.

"To me the idea was preposterous and I would not forgive, and I did not realize that divorce meant separation. Although Paul had always been kindness itself to me, I rushed into the divorce court and before I knew it I was 'an unattached woman.'

"I can never make you understand what it means to a woman who has been married to all at once find that she has no one on whom to rely. Even if the wild transports of first love have softened into the habit of having some one always near, the mere breaking of this habit is like breaking your heart. If I had it to do over again I would forgive, and forgive, and forgive every time my husband asked to be forgiven.

"I don't know just why I have said all this to you, dear young people, unless it was because I wanted you to remember me if any slight trouble came to you and to try and make you understand that the humbling of your pride to, and the forgiveness of each one's little faults or great sins is only